Brookville Road Walkway – Status Report

The current effort to insert a pedestrian walkway along Brookville Road began three years ago. The last major milestone in the project occurred almost a full year ago and constituted a fairly potent setback. In December last year, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) rebuffed significant aspects of the 30% design developed to that point and in a subsequent review by the State Highway Administration (SHA), officials there offered no compromise on the HPC preferences. Essentially, the design was at an impasse and the Village Board of Managers directed staff to gather with the engineers, HPC and SHA representatives and return to the drawing board.

Nine months later, the Village is now back in a position to return to both the HPC and SHA for formal design approval. In the time since, the walkway's width, divider material, handicap access accommodations, and private property impacts have all been revised. Important from the project's inception was that the walkway should be a space separated from vehicular traffic, be installed at-grade rather than elevated and not be made of concrete. The overhauled design remains true to these prerequisites and preliminary informal reviews by both HPC and SHA officials have both been positive.

Summary of Design Elements

The walkway surface will be gravel held in place with a plastic honey-combed matrix. Gravel in this construction is environmentally friendly, handicapped accessible and will replicate both the color and texture of the walking surface as it exists naturally along the corridor today. Sample installations may be seen at the Pentagon's recently opened "9/11 Memorial" and at the Botanical Gardens on Constitution Avenue downtown.

The walkway width will undulate from a minimum just under 3-feet wide to a maximum of 5-feet. Half of the overall walkway's length will be less than 5-feet and half will be at 5-feet.

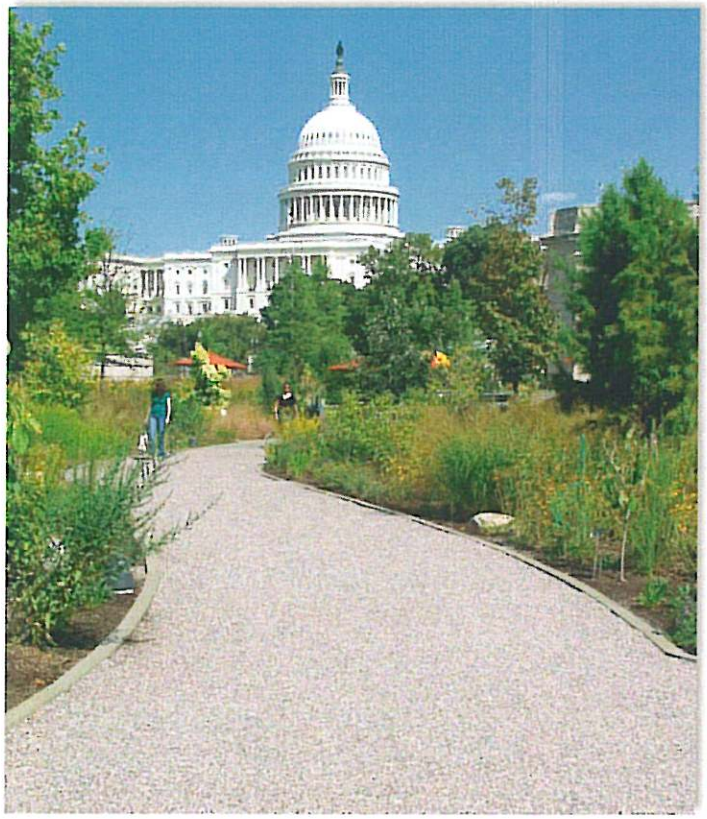
The divider between vehicles and pedestrians is proposed as rough-sawn timbers with a steel backing plate for additional strength and impact resistance. The timber will be 6"x8" pressure treated material but weather to a grey. It will be rustic but strong and elevated 2 inches above the ground to allow the free flow of rainwater onto the porous walkway.

The roadway shifts have been scaled back. At only three points along the corridor is the existing asphalt road surface shifted to the west. In two of those locations the shift is 1½ feet and less.

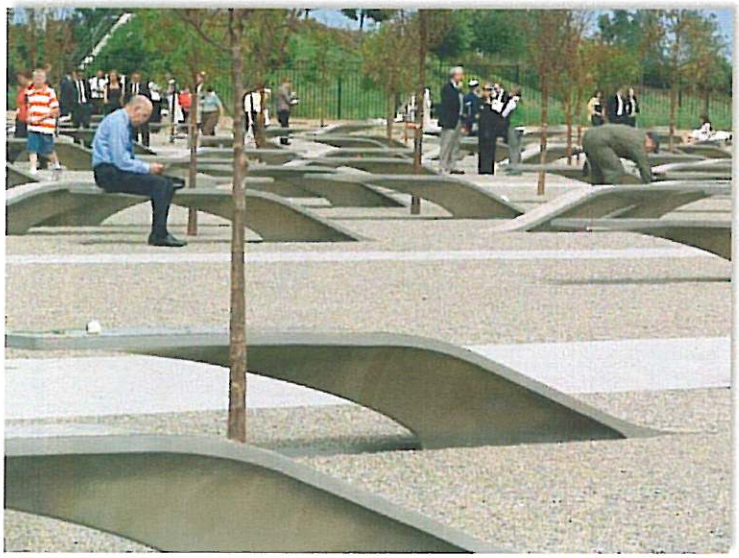
The handicapped access ramps' "tactile warning surfaces" will be cast iron instead of yellow plastic appliqués that pepper most new constructions.

Understanding that both HPC and SHA representatives had responded favorably to the overhauled design, the Brookville Road Working Group met on September 25 to consider the next steps. The Working Group agreed to recommend that 1) the Board of Managers authorize and approve the expenditure of $34,000 in Safe Speed Program funds for the completion of the official 30% engineering design, and 2) the Board authorize staff to both submit documents for formal SHA review and schedule a second Preliminary Consultation with the HPC for its official approval.

While Brookville Road is a State Highway, the fact that it is in Montgomery County gives the County's Department of Permitting Services control over how storm water is managed. An informal review of the design last week with the County's lead storm water official went favorably.

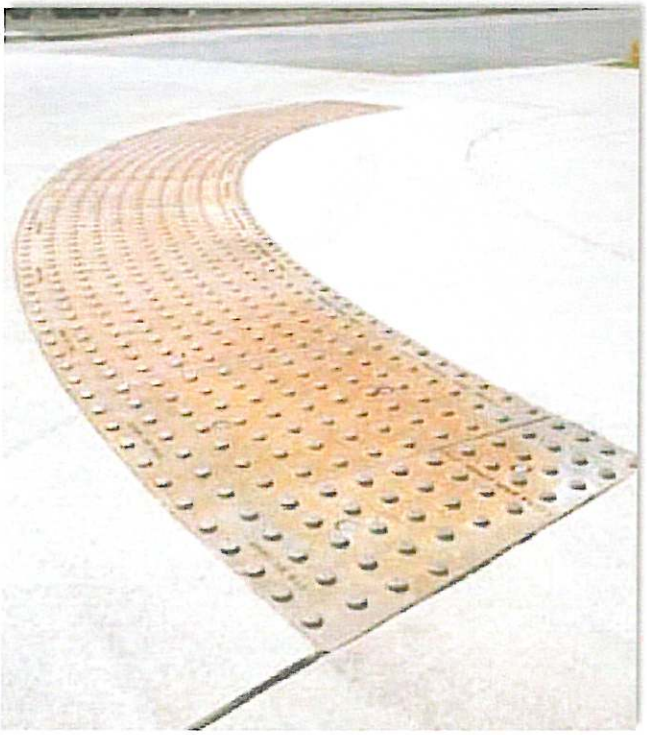


Gravelpave in use at the Botanical Gardens on Constitution Avenue downtown

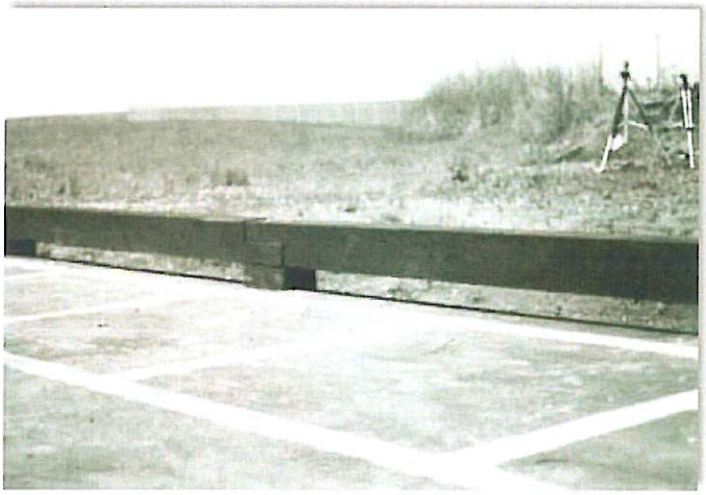


Gravelpave in use at the 9/11 Memorial at the Pentagon

Gravelpave honey-combed matrix



Detachable/Tactile Warning Surface



Timber divider